MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

Lower Level – Room 41, City Hall/Court House, 15 West Kellogg Boulevard August 11, 2011

Present: Richard Dana, Robert Ferguson, Jennifer Haskamp, Renee Hutter, Rich Laffin, John

Manning, Steve Trimble, Diane Trout-Oertel, Matt Mazanec, David Riehle, Matt HIII

Absent: Mark Thomas (excused)

Staff Present: Amy Spong, Christine Boulware, Becky Willging

BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER: 5:05 by Chair Manning

- **II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Commissioner Trout-Oertel motioned to approve the agenda, Commissioner Trimble seconded the motion. The motion passed 11-0.
- III. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: None were stated.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES:

A. July 14, 2011 Business Meeting

Commissioner Trout-Oertel motioned to approve the meeting minutes; Commissioner Haskamp seconded the motion. The motion passed 11-0.

V. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS: None were stated.

VI. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **A.** July Design Review Statistics Not discussed.
- **B.** Legislative Hearing Notification Not discussed.

Staff Spong told the HPC that they could sponsor one more chair member to attend the Statewide Preservation Conference. Commissioner Hill and staff members Spong and and Boulware will be attending.

The House of Hope decision was laid-over – the resolution will likely be to remove the fence and install a more appropriate fence after the growing season. Commissioner Dana asked who decides the appropriate replacement fence. Staff Spong said that they are working on a compromise but that the City Council will not need to take it to the HPC as it will likely be an aluminum wrought iron-looking fence in a similar placement.

VII. PERMIT REVIEW/PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. 55 Victoria Street North, Hill Historic District, by Ross Willits of Steppingstone Theatre, for a building permit for removal and replacement of entrance stairs, removal of the stone pavers and repair of brick stair sidewalls. **HPC File #11-020** (Larson, 266-6643)

Staff Spong read the staff report to the Commission. She noted that in 2005 the Commission denied demolition of the building and the City Council upheld the decision. She reviewed the guidelines and findings. In 2006, the glass block was removed from the entrance landing. Staff recommended approval provided that the conditions are met. Chair Manning asked if there was an issue with the donor applications on the brick of the wing walls. Staff Spong said that she wasn't sure if there were any zoning code provisions for this type of application. Chair Manning asked if the HPC was to review the donor stickers as part of the public hearing. Staff Spong said yes, that she

doesn't know the nature of the stickers - they could be harmful to the brick and they change the look of the facade. Staff Boulware noted that the 2006 HPC decision did not require that the concrete tiles replicate the glass block pattern on the landing. Commissioner Ferguson asked if the original finish was present on the wing walls. Staff Spong said the original was likely concrete, but its not clear when the brick was put on except that it was likely early. Chair Manning asked if there were any historic photos available. Staff Spong said there were a few, but only a postcard was available that showed the walls prior to the brick. Chair manning asked of the timing of when the brick was first installed and whether the walls should go back to the original material instead. Staff Spong said that if the proposal includes removing the existing brick, the applicant may want to explore keeping it off, though the brick goes all the way around the building. Commissioner Riehle said that it looks like the wing walls were faced with brick, and that potentially there is original material beneath. Chair Manning said that the photo shows that the handrails are in the same location. Commissioner Trimble asked if the donor stickers are permanent. Staff Spong said that they aren't for a specific project and appear to be permanent. Commissioner Laffin asked if the stairs were going to extend towards the sidewalk. Staff Spong said no, they will extend more towards the landing. Commissioner Laffin asked if the coating on the stairs was waterproofing for the space below, and Staff Spong replied yes. He said that the waterproofing might be better underneath the stairs rather than on top. Staff Spong said that the applicant explored that and there is a reason why they aren't proposing that. He asked if part of the perimeter iron fence was lost. Staff said that the fence is early and that part of it has been lost. Commissioner Laffin asked if perhaps the applicant should explore using handrails that are more decorative. Staff Spong said that early pictures don't show the center rails, just the side rails, and that the center rail was a later addition.

The applicants approached the Commission. Laura Krenz is the Vice President and Chair of the Facilities Committee at Steppingstone Theatre. Lewis Ng of Buildings Consulting Group was also present on behalf of the applicant. Ms. Krenz said that she wanted to address three issues presented by the Commission: the applicant will provide samples of the waterproof coating, bricks will be salvaged and only be replaced where necessary (photo was submitted of match), and the waterproofing is necessary on the upper landing. The new tiles will be stamped concrete to match the existing. The donor stickers are temporary and would come off as nature allows. Mr. Ng passed around samples of the waterproofing product and said that he explored options of applying it underneath the landing, but said that it would still allow for penetration of the concrete. Commissioner Laffin asked if there was any grip in the waterproofing material. Mr. Ng said that there was a sand layer. Chair Manning asked if it will be different from the concrete color, and Mr. Ng replied that it would be a close match, but still different. Commissioner Laffin asked if the high gloss could be removed. Mr. Ng said that the gloss will wear away over time. Staff Spong showed pictures of the building and said that it appears that the wing walls were concrete but made to look like stone. Chair Manning asked if the applicants had any concerns about the staff recommendations. Ms. Krenz said that she would like to use stamped concrete instead of stone tiles on the landing. Mr. Ng said that there are not tiles left to salvage. Tiles are different sizes and they would have to custom make each tile. Chair Manning clarified that the staff recommendation was to allow for stamped concrete on the landing. Commissioner Trout-Oertel asked why the waterproofing couldn't go under the stairs. Mr. Ng said that because of the angle of the stairs, the waterproofing application wouldn't adhere and would eventually slide. They need anchorage but don't want to drill any holes for penetration. Commissioner Trout-Oertel asked if the waterproof coating will degrade. Mr. Ng said that the product was designed to handle UV exposure and various weather elements. Commissioner Trout-Oertel said that she was concerned with how the material will change the look. Staff Boulware noted that if the product is approved, it will set a precedent for other projects. Commissioner Dana asked if staff would be able to see a sample of the proposed tile in place, and that staff is conditioning concrete tile and not stamped tile. Staff Spong said that the condition was actually open to interpretation and that it would be fine for

the applicant to explore other techniques. Commissioner Manning asked how much of the stone on the landing will remain. Mr. Ng said that testing showed too much degradation. Mr. Ng said that they will be applying a waterproof coating, but without making any more penetrations. Commissioner Laffin asked if the pavers will actually be cast concrete. Mr. Ng said they will be scored concrete. Commissioner Laffin said that he would need to see a sample and volunteered to be on a design review committee. Staff Spong said that St. Thomas More used scored concrete and was able to come up with an approvable technique. Commissioner Manning asked Mr. Ng if he had done any research about other materials used in the district. Mr. Ng said no. Commissioner Trout-Oertel said that there was a little finished spaced under the skylights, and asked why the waterproofing was only going on the stairs. Mr. Ng said that there is a bathroom located under the stairs. Commissioner Manning noted that there were three levels of stairs, and asked how much was needed above the first two sets. Ms. Krenz said that mold was becoming an issue. Commissioner Manning asked if there were any other products that look more like concrete. Commissioner Hutter asked if there was any way to waterproof the interior. Mr Ng said that water will still get into the concrete if only the interior is waterproofed. Staff Spong said that the new concrete will be in good repair, so waterproofing the exterior may not be necessary. Mr. Ng said that it will still allow for water penetration over time. Commissioner Trout-Oertel said that the exterior waterproofing didn't seem necessary. Commissioner Dana asked if a contractor had been selected and if the work was to be completed this year. Ms. Krenz said yes, and that they will likely be replacing the stickers on the bricks.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel made a motion to revise the first staff recommendation to require that the applicant explore other options to waterproof the stair, including a clear coating and waterproofing from underneath. She also motioned to revise the third recommendation to state that the applicant may consider replacing the existing stone tiles with stamped concrete. Commissioner Dana seconded the motion. Commissioner Hill asked that the difference between the proposed coating and a clear coating be clarified. Chair Manning said that the motion was to find alternative methods for waterproofing. Staff Spong said that the proposed product has a color to it and is shiny. Commissioner Dana asked Commissioner Trout-Oertel if the finish and shine was what she was opposed to. She said yes, and the sand application. Chair Manning said that the current proposal would not be a subtle treatment. The motion passed 10-0.

B. 326 Maria Avenue, Dayton's Bluff Historic District, by Historic Saint Paul, for permits to rehabilitate the residence, remove selected additions at the rear of the property and construct a detached garage. **HPC File #11-021** (Boulware, 266-6715)

Staff read the report recommending conditional approval. Becca Hine from Historic Saint Paul was present and said that she was fine with staff recommendations, and that she will change the scope of work before going out to bid. Ellen Biales provided an overview of the project and said that they are now in phase 2. **Commissioner Mazanec made a motion to approve based on the staff recommendations. Commission Hutter seconded the motion.** Commissioner Mazanec asked if new window openings will be made. Staff replied that there will be new windows to match the size of the existing but they will have a simple design. **The motion was passed 10-0.**

C. 695 Fourth Street East, Dayton's Bluff Historic District, by Historic Saint Paul, for permits to rehabilitate the residence, remove selected additions at the rear of the property and construct a detached garage. **HPC File #11-022** (Boulware, 266-6715)

Staff read the report recommending conditional approval. Commissioner Mazanec asked if Historic Saint Paul was able to find a new home for the chicken coop in the rear yard. Ms. Biales said that the coop will be moved and likely reused at Skidmore Park in Dayton's Bluff. Ms. Hine asked if there was indeed a Palladian window in the

upper gable. Staff Boulware said yes, and that it could be reopened and restored. Commissioner Mazanec motioned to approve based on the staff recommendations. Commission Trimble seconded the motion. The motion passed 10-0.

VIII. Pre-Application Review

A. 172 E. Fourth Street (TPT Building), Lowertown Historic District, by Barb Van Loenen of Twin Cities Public Television, for a pre-application review to construct a new entrance at Fourth Street that extends above the height of the building. (Spong, 266-6714)

Staff Spong read the staff report. Barb VanLoenen was present with Joann Hawkins and Brian Tempes as representatives of the project. Ms. VanLoenen listed the project objectives and said that TPT has been in the building for 24 yrears. She said that the goal was to make the building more visible and accessible. Reps from TPT have met with HPC staff three times prior. Mr. Tempes, the project architect, gave a presentation discussing the existing condition of the building and what the current proposal encompasses. Commissioner Trout-Oertel asked if the sign was internally illuminated. Mr. Tempes said yes, as will the vertical element. Staff Spong clarified that the sign should not project above the upper cornice line, and said that she told the applicants this at their last meeting. Commissioner Trout-Oertel said that internally illuminated signage is also forbidden by the guidelines. Staff Boulware said that signage above the cornice line is also addressed in zoning language. Chair Manning asked about how the TPT sign will be read on either side of the sign. Mr. Tempes said that they have to figure out a way to display the lettering on either side. Chair Manning also noted the signage above the ground floor entry, saying that it is displayed different ways in the drawings. Mr. Tempes said that the TPT will be on the brow above the door. Chair Manning said that it was only readable on certain elevations and angles. Commissioner Ferguson said that he liked the direction that the project was going, but that he doesn't see that labeling the marker is necessary. Commissioner Mazanec agreed that labeling the tower isn't necessary, and asked how high it will project above the parapet. Staff Spong said that the tower will project above the parapet but not as much as shown in the plan. Commissioner Mazanec agreed that the height of the building appears out of proportion. Staff Spong said that the elevation on Fourth Street shows a natural stepping of the building cornices along that part of the block, and that the TPT appears too high in comparison. Commissioner Haskamp said that if the TPT lettering is taken off then the lantern should be shortened, because the letters take up so much space from a vertical standpoint, removal would make the proportions skewed. Chair Manning said that he felt the proportion was ok. Commissioner Ferguson agreed with Chair manning. He said that the proposal was similar to the historic images of other buildings on Jackson & Fourth Street. He said that if those buildings had survived, it would have set a standard for structures to extend beyond the parapet. Staff Spong said that she was struggling with the departure from the guideline about boxy massing and said that what was left in the district was heavy cornices, and that this is a departure from that. Staff Boulware said that some of the remaining buildings have tall flagpoles right at the corners. Ms. VanLoenen said that the marker has always been a component for public art. Commissioner Dana said that he liked the height of the lantern and marker, but that the letters detract. Commissioner Manning suggested that something be created to anchor the "storefront" corner and the marker, and asked where the marker will terminate. Commissioner Dana asked if the marker will glow. Mr. Tempes said that they have had many discussions about where the marker will start and end and that somehow it will glow and be the same material as the lantern. Commissioner Ferguson said the proposal is similar to the sculptural piece on the children's theatre. Commissioner Trout-Oertel said that the marker will be very effective.

Staff Spong said that she wants feedback on the lantern and the glass curtain wall because she is concerned about the ratio of solid to void space. Commissioner Trout-Oertel said that the lantern seems tied to the skyway. Chair Manning asked Staff Spong if the solid to void ratio spanned the whole side of the building or just one part of

the building, which is more solid on the back end. Staff Spong said that it referred to the rhythm of the wall. Commissioner Manning said that one solution might be that less glass be used. Staff Spong asked if the commissioners had any thoughts on how to address the size and composition of the lantern. Commissioner Riehle said that the district is being altered by the new light rail and that the skyways are not characteristic of the district. He said that the addition of the lantern and tower is different than any building, but part of the evolution of the district. Staff Boulware said that there are still guidelines and we don't want something that is fake historic but something that doesn't alter the perception of the character of the district. Chair Manning asked what guideline gives pause about the glass. Staff Spong noted the guideline that stated double-hung windows and mullions that emphasize the verticality of the building. Commissoner Dana asked Mr. Tempes to comment on the proportions of the lites on the side elevation and to those in the lantern. Mr. Tempes said that the proportions on the side elevation and the lantern were sympathetic to the even smaller windows seen in the building and that the design was creating a pattern of small, medium, and large and they were emphasizing the verticality of the building within those different components. He said that there is a similarly large window on the Fourth Street elevation, though it has heavy bands that run horizontally. Commissioner Manning said that difference is that there is a very clear horizontal element present. Commissioner Dana said that the verticals on the windows are closer and don't look as much as double-hungs.

Commissioner Ferguson said that he thinks the design is compatible. Chair Manning said that the district has boxiness but doesn't have transparent corners. Ms. VanLoenen said that the main entrance will be on the first floor with a lobby and private space, and that there will be a gathering space put into the corner. She said that the glass at the street level was very important, but that they would consider putting a structural element at the corner. Staff Boulware asked how the applicant plans to fill the horizontal space. Mr. Tempes said that the area coming off of the skyway will be a two-story space. Staff Spong said that she would like to hear the Commission's opinion about the heavy metal top being enough to act as a cornice. Commissioner Trout-Oertel said that the cornice doesn't seem to be part of a building since it appears to tie into the skyway. She said that it's more important for the large window to relate, as it seems to detract from the corner and the district. She said that maybe it would be better if the cornice was thicker. Commissioner Dana agreed that the cornice should be thicker. Staff Spong asked if the mullions were dark on the outside and white inside, and said that the HPC does not approve galvanized metal or tinted glass. Mr. Tempes said that the mullions will be dark. Chair Manning summarized the discussion, saying that there was no consensus about the height, that the windows should relate to the original and the guidelines, that the marker was ok, and that the corner for the storefront should be anchored.

IX. Committee Reports

- A. Education Committee (Ferguson, Thomas, Trout-Oertel) Nothing to address.
- B. Greater Lowertown Master Plan Taskforce (Ferguson) The draft was revised and will go in front of the HPC in early October.
- C. Saint Paul Historic Survey Partnership Project (Trimble, Manning) No new report.
- D. 3M Advisory Committee/Workgroups update (Trimble, Mazanec) No new report.

X. ADJOURN: 8:05 P.M.

Submitted by: B. Willging